

# The Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) National Participant Outcome Study (2025)

## Summary Results Report

### What was the 2025 CAPC Participant Outcome Study?

The CAPC Participant Outcome Study examined the following questions:

- Who participates in CAPC across Canada?
- Does the program help parents/caregivers, and their children gain knowledge, skills, positive health practices and/or improve health and wellbeing?
- Do parents/caregivers have a positive experience with the CAPC overall (i.e., do they feel welcome and accepted)?

### The Community Action Program for Children

CAPC is a national community-based program funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

CAPC aims to promote the health and wellbeing of children aged 0-6 years and their families who face challenges that may put their health at risk.

Over 191,000 parents, caregivers and children participate in CAPC each year in approximately 380 projects across Canada.

### How was the data collected?

To answer these questions, CAPC program participants (parents/caregivers) were invited to complete an online survey during a six-week period in January and February 2025. CAPC projects invited participants to complete the survey by way of e-mail and/or by distributing a promotional poster providing access to the survey. Project staff were encouraged to promote the completion of the survey during programming so that they could provide access to an electronic device and/or provide assistance to those in need.

Since this was the first time CAPC has implemented an online survey to collect this type of information, this study is considered a “pilot”. Lessons learned will help inform future iterations of studies of this nature. For example, not all program participants had access to a personal device and access to Wi-Fi or internet in order to complete the online survey. In addition, not all project sites had devices for participant use and access to internet or Wi-Fi. This was of particular concern for program participants living in rural or remote areas and particularly for those receiving home visits.

### How many surveys were completed?

- A total of **3,713 surveys** were completed by program participants across Canada.
- Surveys were completed in each of the provinces/territories.
- In most provinces, the proportion of completed surveys was similar to the proportion of participants served annually (within 4% or less) as reported on the Annual Reporting Tool (2022-23). The proportion of surveys completed in Ontario was underrepresented compared to annual participation (7% less) and the proportion of surveys from Quebec was overrepresented when compared to annual participation numbers (5% more).



## Who responded to the survey?

Respondents to the survey were from diverse social and demographic backgrounds.

### Demographic Profile of Respondents:

- **Gender:** The majority of respondents were female (93%), while 7% were male and 0.2% identified as another gender.
- **Age:** Only 0.5% of respondents to the survey were 19 years of age or younger, while 22% were between 22 and 29 years, 58% were between 30 and 39 years, and 19% were 40 years of age or older.
- **Education:** When asked about their highest level of education, 9% of respondents reported less than highschool, 16% had finished highschool, 19% had obtained a certificate or diploma after highschool and 56% had obtained a college or university degree.
- **Lone Parent:** 25% of respondents to the survey were lone parents/caregivers.
- **Indigenous Identity:** 10% of respondents to the survey identified as First Nations, 4% identified as Métis and 0.2% as Inuit.
- **Newcomers to Canada:** 34% of all respondents were not born in Canada. Of these, 50% had lived in Canada for 5 years or less, 24% had lived in Canada for 6 to 10 years and 27% had lived in Canada for 11 years or more.
- **Languages:** Respondents were asked to identify the languages that they speak and understand. Responses were as follows: 83% selected English, 34% selected French, 3% selected Indigenous languages, and 27% reported other languages.
- **Race/Ethnic Background:** Respondents were asked which race/racial/ethnic backgrounds best describe them. Responses were as follows: Black (8%); East Asian (5%); Latin American (7%); Middle Eastern/West Asian (7%); South Asian (6%); Southeast Asian (4%); White (65%); Another race (2%).
- **Income:** 19% of respondents reported having a total household income of less than \$20,000, 23% had an income between \$20,000 and \$43,000, 15% had an income between \$43,001 and \$60,800 and 44% had a household income of \$60,801,00 or more.<sup>1</sup> To place this in context, according to Statistics Canada the Low-Income Measure threshold for a three-person household (before taxes) is \$60,282 and is \$69,608 for a four-person household.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 19% of respondents answered “don’t know”, “prefer not to answer” or did not answer the question on household income.

<sup>2</sup> Low income Measure Thresholds are available at <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110023201>.

Many respondents to the survey experienced challenges that may put their health and wellbeing at risk.

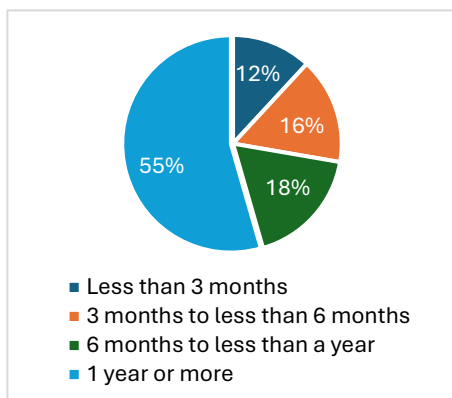
Challenges Experienced by Survey Respondents	
Stress	72%
Mental health	46%
Feeling isolated	40%
Parenting a child with developmental or physical challenges or special needs	27%
Physical health	26%
Having enough food for their family	25%
Housing	21%
Drug/alcohol use in the family	7%
Family violence	7%
Other (i.e., financial/employment)	6%

## What did the study find?

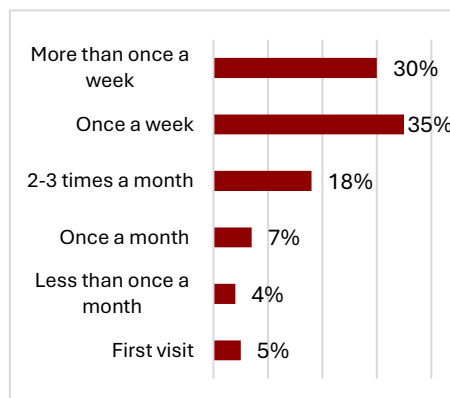
### A. Program Participation

Respondents to the survey reported that their families attended CAPC for long durations of time and that they participated frequently. Respondents to the survey attended several types of programs with the majority attending group programs or classes.

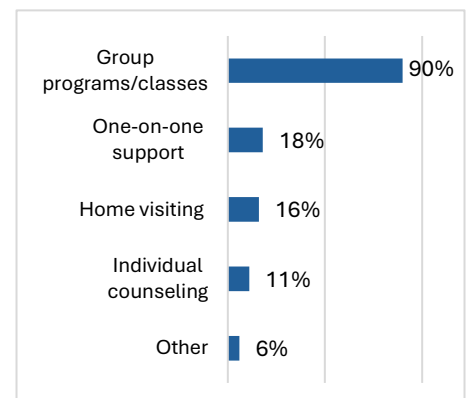
#### Duration of Participation



#### Frequency of Participation



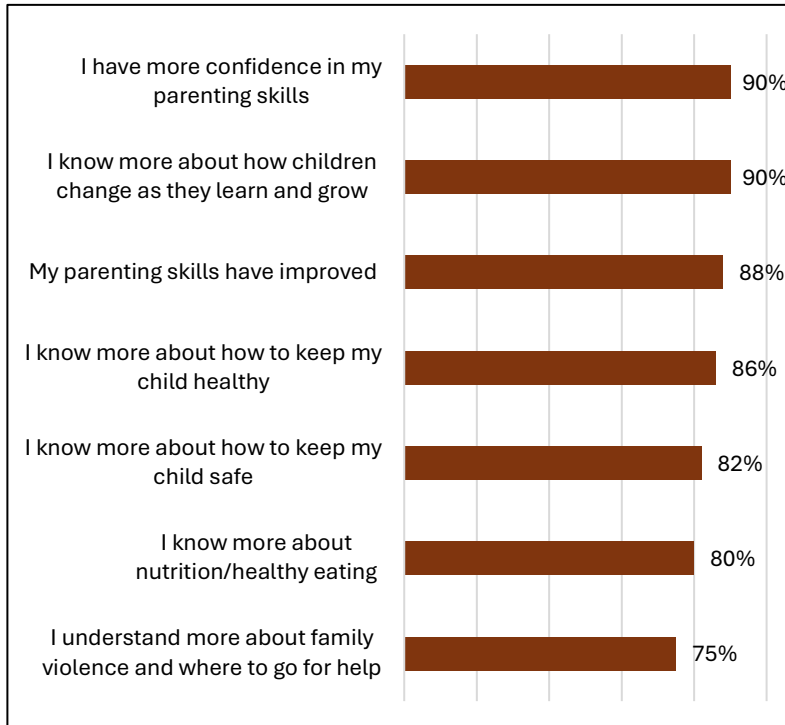
#### Type of Programs Attended



## B. Participant Outcomes

Respondents to the survey reported gaining knowledge and skills related to parenting and child health and development as a result of coming to the program.

Respondents who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with the following as a result of coming to the program



### CAPC Participant Testimonials

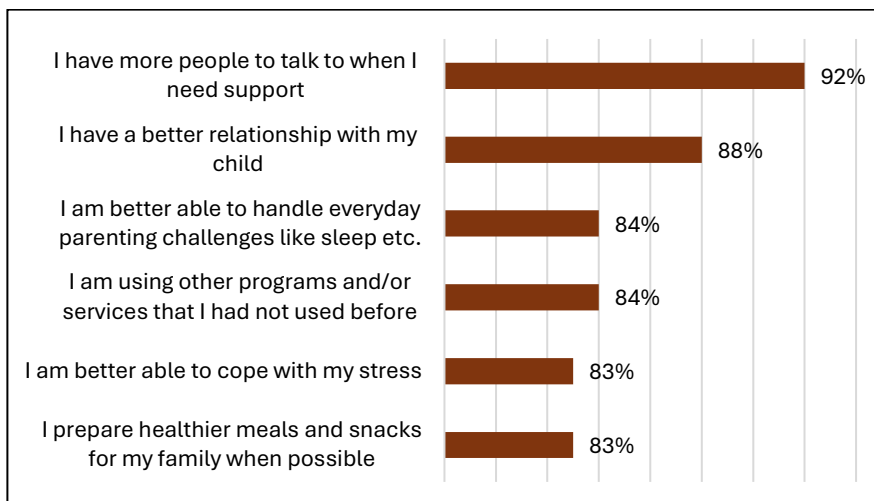
*"Going to these programs I have noticed a change in my parenting and how I approach things such as discipline or talking my child through a melt down/tantrum.....I praise my children more. And instead of getting mad I let them show me what they're good at and point out the good."*

*"It helps improve my social communication, and help(ed) me learn healthy well being through balance diet, and also give us knowledge about baby behavior and how to be safe for the baby well being."*

*"The program allowed me to meet new mothers and learn more about physical and mental health, which helped me enormously in my role as a mother. It also allowed me to learn more about proper wound care and CPR."*

Respondents to the survey reported gaining positive health practices that support parent and child health and wellbeing as a result of coming to the program.

Respondents who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with the following as a result of coming to the program



### CAPC Participant Testimonials

*"This program has been an important gateway into other programs and the community in general."*

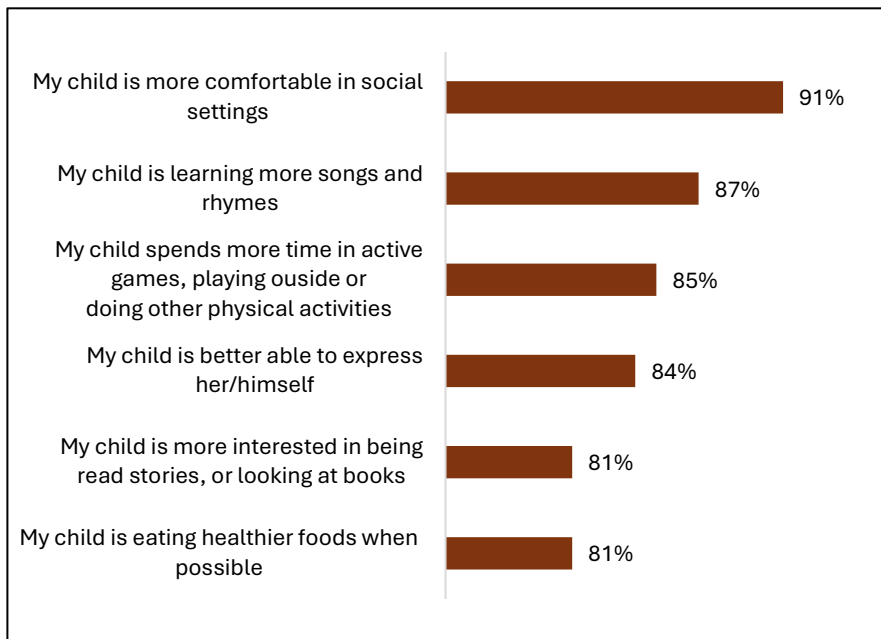
*"This program helps me to deal with my kids and emotions and other things in a better and positive way."*

*"I find it so helpful to be surrounded with others going through similar stages and struggles as me and helps in not feeling so isolated."*

**Respondents to the survey reported that their children gained knowledge, skills, and health practices that are important to their health and development as a result of coming to the program.**

Approximately, 90% of respondents stated that their child(ren) participated in CAPC. Of these children, 48% were female, 52% were male and 0.1% identified as another gender. The majority of the children were between 1 to 3 years of age (52%), followed by 4 to 6 years (32%) and less than 1 year of age (16%).

**Respondents who "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" with the following as a result of coming to the program**



#### **CAPC Participant Testimonials**

*"It has been a great place for my child to be more active and socialize with other children."*

*"I've noticed such a difference in my daughters independence, how she interacts with others and is involved with learning and sing along time."*

*The program "gives my son and I an opportunity to try new foods. He's eating cucumbers now!"*

**The majority of the respondents to the survey reported that their health and wellbeing as well as the health and wellbeing of their child improved as a result of coming to the program.**

More specifically, responses to the health and wellbeing questions on the survey were as follows:

- **88%** of respondents reported that **their health and wellbeing improved** because of coming to the program;
- **88% of respondents** reported that **their mental health has improved** because of coming to the program; and
- **84%** of respondents reported that the **health and wellbeing of their child improved** as a result of coming to the program.

#### **CAPC Participant Testimonials**

*"This program has helped our overall family health. Help us preserve our [customs] and traditions."*

*"This program has been amazing for my mental health and allowed me to find ways to get help that I needed so that I could be my best self and in return the best mom that I can be for my little one."*

### C. Experience with the Program

The majority of respondents to the survey described their experience with the program as positive and supportive.

When asked about their experience with the program, respondents reported:

- Feeling **welcomed and accepted (97%)**;
- That staff help them to learn how to get **valuable information and resources** needed for their children **(95%)**; and
- That their **personal and cultural beliefs** were respected **(95%)**.

#### **These findings are important because:**

“Parent support programs can have important positive effects on both parenting behaviours and the social and emotional development of young children. One of the key features of these programs is not only what is offered, but how supports are provided. Capacity-building help giving practices that form the basis of the interactions between staff and families ensure the enhancement of parents’ capacities which in turn gives them the competence and confidence necessary to interact with and promote the social and emotional development of their children.” (Trivette & Dunst, 2014, P. 7)

### **In Summary**

- Based on the results of this study, the CAPC is having a positive impact on the knowledge, skills and health behaviours of the parent/caregivers who responded to this survey and their children. The majority of survey respondents reported that the program improved their knowledge and skills, promoted their parenting confidence and expanded their social support networks. In addition, the majority of respondents reported that the program has helped to develop their child’s social, emotional and early literacy skills and improve their overall health and wellbeing.
- The program is also being delivered in a family friendly manner with the vast majority of survey respondents reporting feeling welcomed and respected and learning about ways to obtain the information and resources needed for their children.
- This was the first time CAPC collected data from program participants using an online survey and in doing so many lessons were learned. Many of these lessons will inform future data collection efforts with the intent to reach as many program participants as possible.

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the parents/caregivers and CAPC project coordinators and staff who actively took part in the implementation of this study. We thank you for your commitment.

The survey used in this study was informed by the following surveys:

1. Benzie, K, Clarke, D, Barker, L & Mychasiuk, R. (2012). Upstart Parent Survey: A psychometrically valid tool for the evaluation of prevention-focussed parenting programs. *Maternal Child Health Journal*.
2. BC Early Childhood Development Project. The ECD Evaluation Project: Parent Survey Rationale. (March 2013).
3. FRP Canada: E-Valuation. Participant Survey.

**Kelly Sears Consulting Group** and **Narrative Research** were contracted to implement the online survey and conduct the data analysis on which this report is based.

### **References:**

Trivette CM, Dunst CJ. Community-Based Parent Support Programs. In: Tremblay RE, Boivin M, Peters RDeV, eds. Tremblay RE, topic ed. *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development* [online]. <https://www.child-encyclopedia.com/parenting-skills/according-experts/community-based-parent-support-programs>. Updated: December 2014. Accessed June 25, 2025.